

Critical Work Function: Comply with applicable regulations and standards

Key Activity: Record information according to established procedures

Title: Laboratory notebook content and format

Assessment:

While company-specific policies on laboratory notebook documentation practices will vary, a number of commonalities will exist. Within the teaching laboratory, instructors should establish what their particular expectations are for their students' laboratory notebook entries and students should be evaluated according to these expectations.

You can assess a student's proficiency in keeping a laboratory notebook by evaluating any entry for a completed experiment. Laboratory notebooks are commonly expected to have the following content and format:

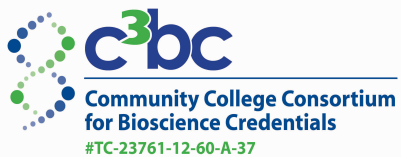
- Format
 - All entries are made in pen
 - The front of the notebook should contain the technician's name and other relevant identifying information (e.g. institution, project, etc.)
 - The first few pages of the notebook should be dedicated to a Table of Contents
 - The top of each page should contain:
 - The experiment's title
 - The technician's name
 - The current date
 - The bottom of each page should contain:
 - The technician's signature and date
 - All blank spaces on the page should be marked out
 - The information recorded should reflect a chronological timeline
 - Errors should be marked out with a single line and initialed
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- Content
 - Experiment's purpose is clearly stated
 - The procedure is written such that it can be followed and reproduced by another technician (or an SOP or procedure is referenced)
 - Observations and data are recorded
 - Relevant formulas and calculations are present
 - Tables, graphs, diagrams, etc. have titles, labels, and legends (as appropriate)
 - A general discussion of observations and results appears at the end of the experiment

Resources for teaching:

- Seidman, L.A., and C.J. Moore. 2009. Documentation: The Foundation of Quality. pp 91-111 *In: Basic Laboratory Methods for Biotechnology*

Pearson Education, Inc., San Francisco, CA.

- Seidman, L.A., M.E. Kraus, D.L. Brandner, J. Mowery. 2011. Laboratory Exercise 3: Keeping a Laboratory Notebook. pp 57-65 *In: Laboratory Manual for Biotechnology and Laboratory Science* Pearson Education, Inc., San Francisco, CA.



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